



**2007/08**

**FIRST YEAR MINI-GRANT  
APPLICATION GUIDELINES**

**FOR**

**EARLY LEARNING WITH FAMILIES @ YOUR LIBRARY**  
USING CHILD DEVELOPMENT KNOWLEDGE TO ENRICH LIBRARY SERVICES

**Application Deadline:  
June 4, 2007**

**Funding Source:  
Library Services and Technology Act  
California State Library**



## **Early Learning with Families (ELF) @ Your Library**

USING CHILD DEVELOPMENT KNOWLEDGE TO ENRICH LIBRARY SERVICES

### **Vision**

Position libraries as community learning centers that offer families and their young children stimulating opportunities for play and early learning. Design and implement innovative library services that reflect current research and best practices related to child development and that engage babies, toddlers, preschoolers, their parents, and childcare providers. Deliver these services primarily through the power of parental connection and modeling. Create places for families that inspire early learning through stimulating surroundings, relevant resources, and opportunities for networking, experimentation and play. Offer a wide range of resources that reflect the needs and interests of the families and children involved. Integrate community organizations and their expertise into early learning programming, events and resources. Implement policies and procedures that accommodate the needs of families with very young children. Transform libraries into family centered early learning environments in which families and their youngest children are introduced to the magic of the written word, the joys of storytelling, the wonder of books, and the value of language through the realm of play and the power of parents as teachers.

### **Goals**

- ❖ Increase usage of library services by families and childcare providers with infants, toddlers and preschoolers.
- ❖ Increase community awareness of the library as an early childhood development and parenting resource.
- ❖ Increase childcare providers' and parents' confidence in supporting young children's early development, learning and literacy skills.
- ❖ Increase supportive parental and caregiver behaviors that promote early learning and literacy skills.

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## **Mini- Grant Guidelines 2007/08**

1. Although the State Library would ideally like to assist all interested libraries with the Early Learning with Families (ELF) initiative, a limited amount of funding is available, which restricts the number of libraries (up to 20) that will be selected for funding.
2. Libraries that are new to the concepts of early learning and have yet to restructure their Children's Services accordingly are invited to apply.
3. Libraries selected to participate in this initiative agree to:
  - Commit to undertaking ELF as a collaborative venture between Children's Services and Library Literacy Services or a community literacy agency (where no Library Literacy program exists).
  - Commit to sending three library representatives to a two-and-a-half-day training session scheduled for October 2-4, 2007. Training attendees will include a representative from Children's Services, Literacy Services, and Library Administration. All training and travel costs will be at no expense to the participating library.
  - Commit to implementing at least one aspect of an early learning model as presented at the ELF training. This may include, but is not limited to: programming, collections and resources, community collaborations, policies and procedures and/ or library environments. Evidence-based research and early learning concepts as well as ELF philosophy, values and promising practices should serve as the framework for any implementation plan undertaken. (See the *Program Characteristics* document below).
  - Develop an implementation plan and budget as part of the ELF training. Implementation plans will be formally submitted to the State Library shortly after the training for final review and award of funds. Each library's final implementation plan will be funded, up to a maximum of \$5,000.
  - Identify outreach strategies to engage families of young children as participants in this initiative, including current library users as well as underserved populations (e.g., low-income families, teen parents, non-English speakers) who may not currently use the library.
  - Comply with all LSTA and State Library reporting requirements, including the completion of both narrative and financial reports due on January 31, April 30 and July 31, 2008.
4. Eligible applications will be evaluated and scored as follows:
  - Community demographics and need (*20 maximum points*)
  - Envisioned library impact of ELF (*20 maximum points*)
  - Children's Services and Literacy Services collaboration (*20 maximum points*)
  - Community partnerships and outreach ideas (*20 maximum points*)
  - Library capacity (*20 maximum points*)
5. The mini-grant application form is available on the California State Library website at [http://www.library.ca.gov/html/lsta\\_app\\_07\\_08.cfm](http://www.library.ca.gov/html/lsta_app_07_08.cfm)
6. A completed application packet consists of an original application (signed in blue ink), plus 5 copies, and a signed CIPA Form A [http://www.library.ca.gov/assets/acrobat/lsta/CIPA\\_A.doc](http://www.library.ca.gov/assets/acrobat/lsta/CIPA_A.doc). Applications must be received at the State Library no later than **4:00pm on June 4, 2007** at the address indicated on the application form.
7. If you have further questions, please contact Suzanne Flint at 916-651-9796 or [sflint@library.ca.gov](mailto:sflint@library.ca.gov)

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## **Program Characteristics**

Although the specifics of ELF libraries may vary greatly, they share the following common characteristics:

1. Enhanced programs and services reflect child development concepts, and are targeted to families with children from birth to 5 years of age.
2. Programs and services acknowledge the needs of the WHOLE child, including development of cognitive (language and literacy), social, emotional, and physical skills.
3. Programs are designed to provide opportunities for parent-supported, child-directed exploration and play.
4. Programs employ a facilitative, rather than instructive, approach to learning among families, parents, and childcare providers.
5. Parents' expertise as their children's first teacher is recognized and nurtured.
6. Comfortable family-friendly spaces are provided which convey a welcoming atmosphere, with dedicated resources for parents and young children that are accessible and engaging, and programming that is convenient and compelling.
7. Policies are reviewed and revised to better accommodate the needs of families with very young children.
8. Children's Services work collaboratively with Literacy Services, and other library departments, to implement and deliver ELF programming.
9. Community partnerships are sought and formed in order to involve, utilize and highlight the expertise of area organizations and agencies.
10. Innovative outreach strategies are used to engage families with young children, particularly those who do not typically use the library.
11. Services are delivered not only at the library but also at community locations where families frequent.
12. Families enjoy participating in ELF programs and utilize the library more frequently.